

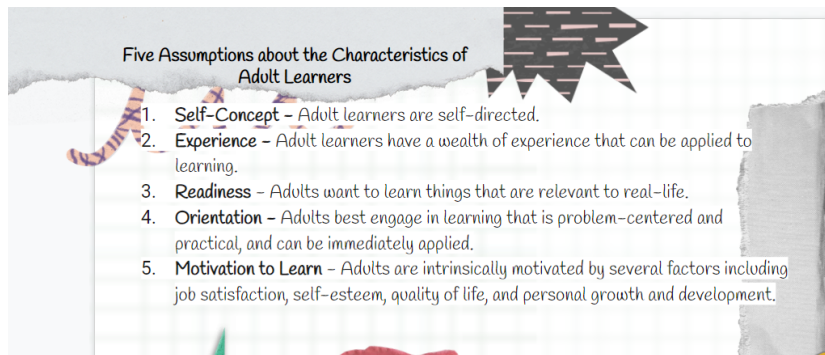
Top Ten Tips for Celebrating & Elevating Students

1. Build relationships

This quote, by Timothy Hilton in Education Week, best summarizes the importance of building relationships with students. *“Building relationships with students is by far the most important thing a teacher can do. Without a solid foundation and relationships built on trust and respect, no quality learning will happen.”* We should seek to know students’ interests, hobbies, goals, strengths and barriers.

2. Use andragogy

Andragogy is the art and science of adult learning as defined by educator Malcolm Knowles. Knowles argued that adult learners possess different characteristics than children, and that these assumptions should be used as a basis for adult instruction.



Implications of Andragogy

- ☐ Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
- ☐ Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
- ☐ Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.
- ☐ Adult learning is process-centered rather than content-oriented.

Adult Learning Theory-Andragogy- of Malcolm Knowles

<https://elearningindustry.com/the-adult-learning-theory-andragogy-of-malcolm-knowles>

3. Make time count

Time is a precious commodity that most people don't seem to have enough of. When adult learners enter our classrooms, they have carved time from their already busy schedules to pursue a goal. We can honor their sacrifice of time by making their classroom time meaningful. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it count.

4. Create emotional safety

One goal of learning is to transfer information from short-term memory to long-term memory. The brain gives high priority to "data interpreted as posing a threat to the survival of the individual" as well as emotional data. This causes the attention of the learner to shift from the process of learning to the source of the stimulus. "How a student *'feels'* about a learning situation determines the amount of attention devoted to it. *Emotions interact with reason to support or inhibit learning.*" (Sousa, David A. (2006): *How the brain learns* (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press)

5. Use responsive teaching

Responsive teaching is an approach in which teachers adjust instruction in order to better meet the needs of students. Responsive teaching is connected to Differentiated Instruction.

- ❖ You can adjust plans when necessary (pacing).
- ❖ Answer students' questions and address their concerns.
- ❖ Explore how students can have that classroom feel in a virtual setting, if applicable.

What other ideas do you have about adjusting instruction to meet students' needs?

6. Build student confidence

Students need to experience some kind of "win" early in the course. Challenge students to rethink failure. Intervene early. Encourage growth mindset. Focus on the mistake, not the person who made the mistake.

7. Teach metacognitive skills

Because adult students spend less time in our programs than in traditional/ formal school settings, we don't have time to cover everything they might need help with. We have to teach students how to monitor their learning.

- Help students to find their learning style using a simple profile.
- Give them guiding questions before watching a video so that they learn

how to listen for critical information.

- Use error analysis problems or open-ended critical thinking scenarios to develop their reasoning skills.
- Create learning opportunities from mistakes.
- Emphasize process over correct answers.

8. Empower students

Sage on the stage or guide on the side? Help students to *navigate technology*.

This is very much needed in online and hybrid classes. Build an classroom atmosphere of *collaboration/ teamwork* so that they are comfortable working together and learning from each other. Don't scold adult students about things they should already know. Find a way to embed the material in a lesson or as a review activity and/or offer them *additional resources* to build the skill.

9. Rethink feedback

Feedback is not useful unless it provides information that allows students to recognize erroneous thinking, correct mistakes and misunderstandings, and improve performance. Students need less of "That's good" or "Good job!" and more of "*When you calculated the area of the circle, you forgot to use the radius instead of the given diameter*". Feedback should be directed at the learning outcome and not the person. Feedback also has to be timely. "Feedback is often given long after the opportunity for action or significant impact on learning."

Adams, Amanda. *Feedback that Fosters Growth*. Edutopia:Formative Assessment. 2 February 2023

10. Access student motivation

Survey incoming students to find out their strengths, struggles, and goals. Use this information to encourage them when they want to quit or when they struggle with mastering skills.